ARUBA TODAY®
Thursday
October 23, 2025
T: 582-7800
www.arubatoday.com
facebook.com/arubatoday
instagram.com/arubatoday
Aruba's ONLY English newspaper

Food culture in Aruba

Page 10

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth listens as he and White House Chief of Staff Susie Wiles, right, listen during a meeting with President Donald Trump, in foreground left, and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in the Cabinet Room of the White House, Monday, October 20, 2025, in Washington.

Associated Press

U.S. strikes eighth alleged drug-carrying boat, this time in the Pacific Ocean

By KONSTANTIN TOROPIN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. military launched its eighth strike against an alleged drug-carrying vessel, killing two people in the waters of the eastern Pacific Ocean, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said Wednesday, marking an expansion of the Trump administration's campaign against drug trafficking in South America.

The attack Tuesday night was a departure from the seven previous U.S. strikes that had targeted vessels in the Caribbean. Hegseth said on social media that the latest strike killed two people, bringing the death toll to at least 34 from attacks that began last month.

The strike represents an expansion of the military's targeting area as well as a shift to the waters off South America where much of the cocaine from the world's largest producers is smuggled. Hegseth's post also draws a direct comparison between the war on terrorism that the U.S. declared after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and the Trump administration's crackdown. "Just as Al Qaeda waged war on our homeland, these cartels are waging war on our border and our people," Hegseth said, adding "there will be no refuge or forgiveness only justice."

Republican President Donald Trump has justified the strikes by asserting that the United States is engaged in an "armed conflict" with drug cartels and proclaiming the criminal organizations unlawful combatants, relying on the same legal authority used by President George W. Bush's administration when it declared a war on terrorism.

Targeting a boat in a thoroughfare for cocaine smuggling In a brief video Hegseth posted Wednesday, a small boat, half-filled with brown packages, is seen moving along the water. Several seconds into the video, the boat explodes and is seen floating motionless on the water in flames. The U.S. military has built up an unusually large force in the Caribbean Sea and the waters off the coast of Venezuela since this summer, raising speculation that Trump could try to topple Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. Maduro faces charges of narcoterrorism in the U.S.

In his posts on the strikes, Trump has repeatedly argued that illegal narcotics and the drug fentanyl carried by the vessels have been poisoning Americans.❑

University of Virginia strikes deal to pause Trump administration investigations

By COLLIN BINKLEY
AP Education Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The University of Virginia has agreed to abide by White House guidance forbidding discrimination in admissions and hiring, becoming the latest in a growing list of campuses striking deals with the Trump administration as the college tries to pause months of scrutiny by the U.S. Justice Department.

The agreement was announced by the Justice Department, which began investigating the admissions and financial aid processes at the Charlottesville campus in April. Federal officials accused Virginia's president of failing to end diversity, equity and inclusion practices President Donald Trump has labeled as unlawful discrimination.

The mounting pressure prompted James Ryan to announce his resignation as university president in June, saying the stakes were too high for others on campus if he opted to "fight the federal government in order to save my job." Unlike some universities' deals with the Trump administration, the Virginia agreement announced Wednesday does not include a fine or monetary payment, said Paul Mahoney, interim president of the university, in a campus email. Instead, the university agreed to follow the government's anti-discrimination criteria. Every quarter, the university must provide relevant data showing compliance, personally certified by its president.

The deal, Mahoney wrote, preserves the university's academic freedom and doesn't hurt its attempts to secure federal research funding. And the university won't have external monitoring by the federal government beyond quarterly communications with the Department of Justice.

If Virginia complies, the Justice Department said it would officially end its investigations.

Virginia's settlement follows other agreements signed by Columbia and Brown universities to end federal investigations and restore access to federal funding.

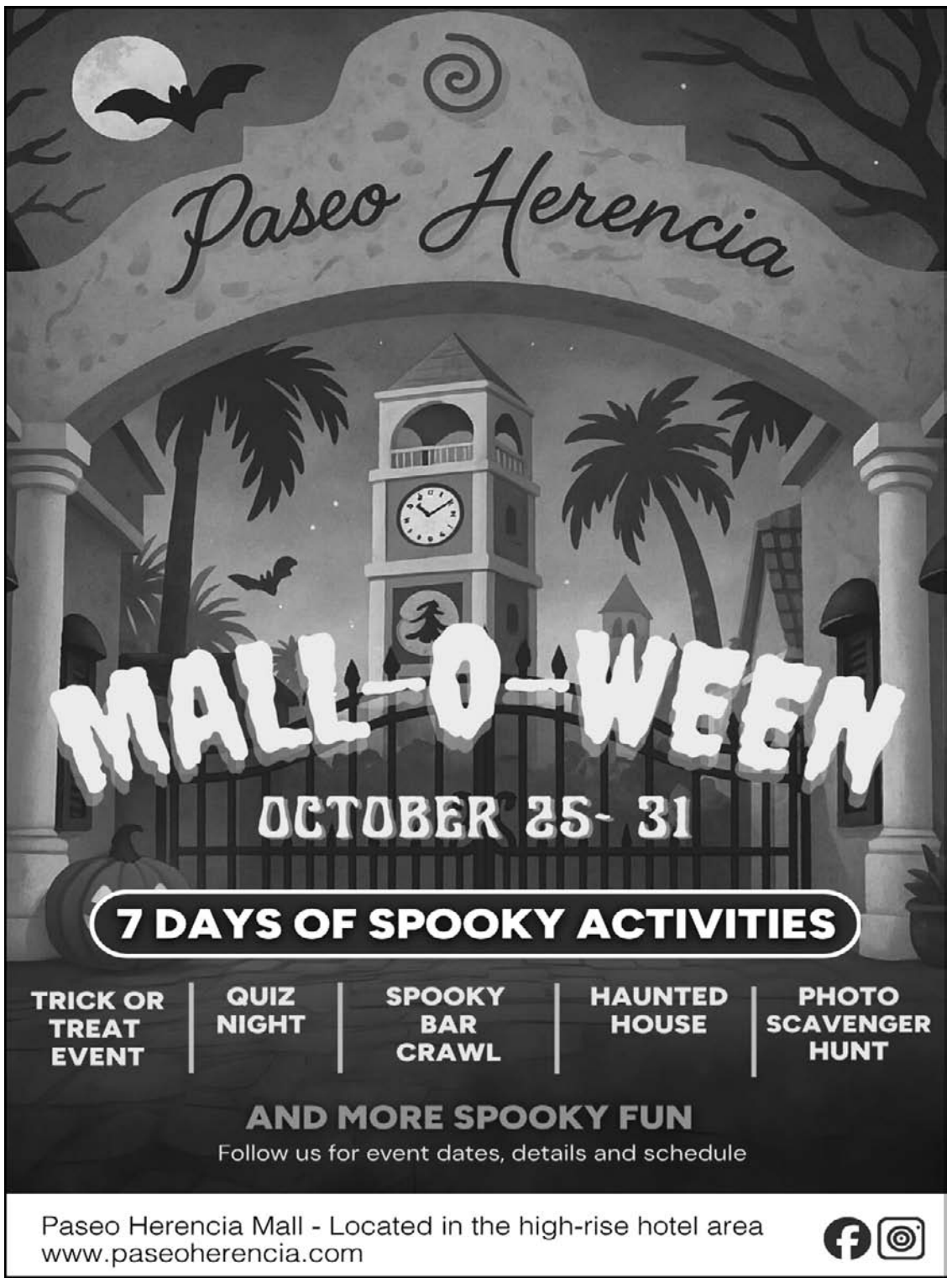
Columbia paid $200 million to the government, and Brown paid $50 million to Rhode Island workforce development organizations. Some of the Justice Department's letters squarely took aim at Ryan, accusing him of engaging in "attempts to defy and evade federal anti-discrimination laws and the directives of your board." Much of the federal scrutiny centered on complaints that Ryan was too slow to implement a March 7 resolution by the university's governing board demanding the eradication of DEI on campus.

As a public university, the University of Virginia was an outlier in the Trump administration's effort to reform higher education according to the president's vision. Previously, the administration had devoted most of its scrutiny to elite private colleges, including Harvard and other Ivy League institutions, accused of tolerating antisemitism.

Since then, the White House has expanded its campaign to other public campuses, including the University of California, Los Angeles, and George Mason University. The Charlottesville campus became a flashpoint this year after conservative critics accused it of simply renaming its DEI initiatives rather than ending them.

The Justice Department expanded the scope of its review several times and announced a separate investigation into alleged antisemitism in May. Among the most prominent critics was America First Legal, a conservative group created by Trump aide Stephen Miller. In a May letter to federal officials, the group said Virginia had only moved to "rename, repackage, and redeploy the same unlawful infrastructure under a lexicon of euphemisms."❑

People climb steps to the Rotunda at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Va., Oct. 11, 2024. Associated Press



Vendors on NYC's Canal Street say they were harassed and asked to show papers in immigration sweep

By JENNIFER PELTZ and JAKE OFFENHARTZ
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A day after a mass of federal agents questioned street vendors and sparked protests on Manhattan's Canal Street, sellers were scarce on the busy strip. Some who did venture out Wednesday, though, were disheartened or riled up by a sweep in which they said people, including U.S. citizens, were pressed to show their papers.

Federal authorities said 14 people, including immigrants and demonstrators, were arrested in Tuesday's sweep. The Department of Homeland Security said it was a targeted operation focused on the alleged sale of counterfeit goods, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement acting Director Todd Lyons said it was "definitely intelligence-driven."

"It's not random. We're just not pulling people off the street," he told Fox News on Wednesday.

But some vendors saw it as an indiscriminate and heavy-handed crackdown by masked agents who queried a wide swath of sellers.

Awa Ngam was selling sweaters Wednesday from a table at a Canal Street intersection where at least one of her fellow vendors was taken away the previous afternoon.

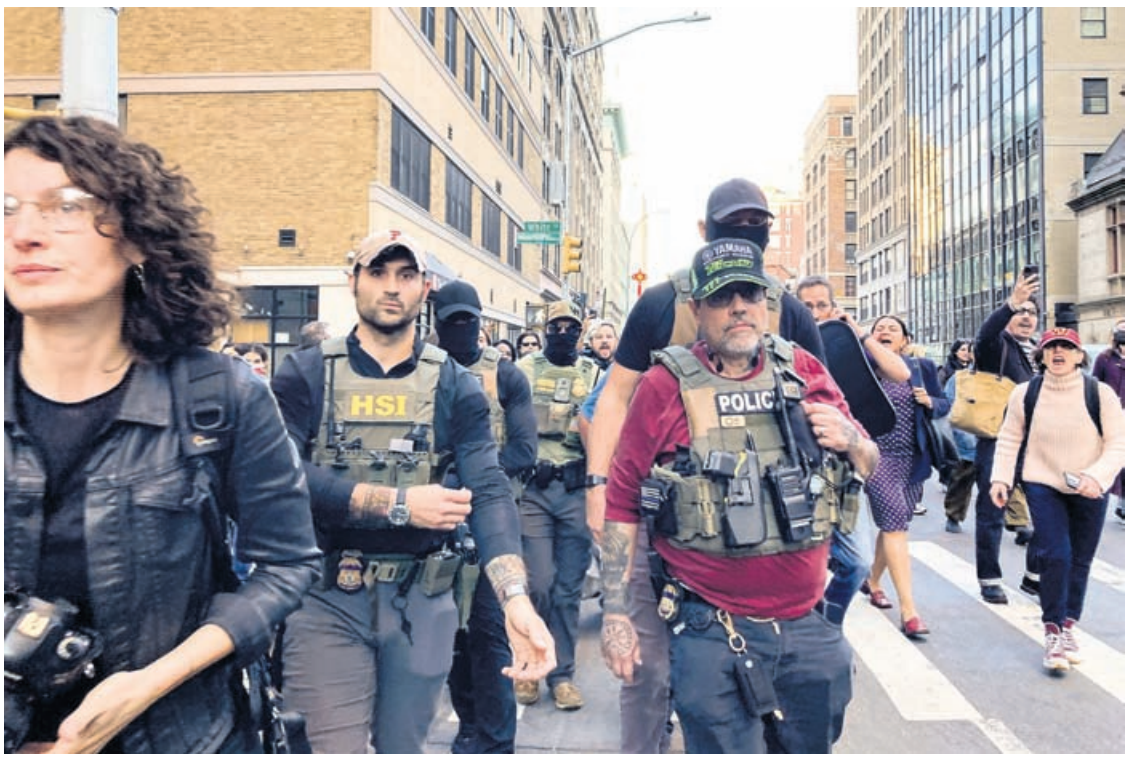
She said she also was asked for ID, showed it, and then for her passport, which she doesn't carry around. Agents quizzed her about how she had come to the U.S., but they eventually backed off after her husband explained that she's an American citizen, she said.

"They asked every African that was here for their status," Ngam said.

She returned to the spot Wednesday unafraid but upset.

"I'm saddened because they should not walk around and ask people for their passport in America," said Ngam, who said she came to the U.S. from Mauritania in 2009. She added that if not for her legal immigration status, she would be fearful: "What if they took me? What would happen to my kids?"

Some other sellers decried the sweep as harassment. Others were keeping a low-profile and shied from speaking with journalists.❑



Federal agents walk down Lafayette Street as demonstrators follow behind after an immigration sweep on Canal Street through Chinatown, Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2025, in New York.
Associated Press

California National Guard to support food banks due to expected food assistance delays

By SOPHIE AUSTIN
Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California Gov. Gavin Newsom said Wednesday he will deploy National Guard troops to support food banks in November, a move that comes in light of anticipated delays to federal food assistance amid the government shutdown. About 40 million low-income people across the U.S., including roughly 5.5 million in California, receive federal food assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps. But Newsom, a Democrat, warned families should expect an interruption to those benefits next month.

"This is serious, this is urgent and requires immediate action," he said.

That's a starkly different mission from President Donald Trump's deployment of California National Guard troops to guard federal buildings and immigration agents in Southern California as part of his mass deportation agenda. He's also deployed or tried to send guard troops to Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Portland, Oregon.

Newsom, Trump's longtime political rival, has fought the president's deployment of troops to Democrat-run cities, saying last month that Trump can't "trample a state's power to protect its people." A federal appeals court heard arguments Wednesday on Trump's deployment of troops to Los Angeles. A lower court judge ruled that the federal government violated federal law. Newsom said he's fast-tracking $80 million for food banks in nearly every county in the state.

The governor's office said he's building off of his efforts to combat food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic. Newsom ordered the National Guard and volunteers from a state-run program in 2020 to work with food banks across the state to identify needs. Troops helped pack and deliver 800 million meals to people, Newsom's office said. ❑

Specialist Colby Chiverton, of the California National Guard, stacks boxes of food supplies at the Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services in Sacramento, Calif., March 21, 2020.
Associated Press

The first EU-Egypt summit will focus on economic ties, migration and Gaza

By SAM McNEIL
Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Egypt and the European Union will hold their first summit on Wednesday in Brussels where leaders will discuss security, trade and migration as well as stability in Gaza.

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President António Costa are expected to announce increased European economic assistance to Egypt and Egypt's admission to the EU's Horizons research incubation program, a 175 billion euro (about $202.7 billion) fund for scientific research and innovation in fields from quantum technology to the space industry.

In this photo provided by Egypt's Presidency Media Office, Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, and President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, pose for a photo, during the opening of the EU-Egypt Investment Conference in Cairo, Egypt, June 29, 2024.

Associated Press

New deals amid regional tensions. The summit comes as the 27-nation bloc has sought to forge new trade and security deals amidst geopolitical tumult sparked by the combative policies of U.S. President Donald Trump and export controls from Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Part of its approach is a so-called Pact for the Mediterranean in which the EU seeks deeper integration with countries from Morocco to Turkey, including offering European aid in exchange for efforts to slow migration to Europe.

Egypt's economic woes

Egypt is weathering soaring inflation, as well as instability from the still-smoldering war in neighboring Gaza.

El-Sissi told Costa and other world leaders last week that U.S. President Donald Trump's Mideast proposal, which aims at ending Israel's two-year war in Gaza, represents the "last chance" for peace in the region and reiterated his call for a two-state solution, saying Palestinians have the right to an independent state.

The EU is Egypt's largest trading partner. During the signing of a joint declaration last year, Brussels announced a 7.4 billion euros (about $8.6 billion) aid package for cash-strapped Egypt in the form of loans, investment and support for specific programs such as migration.

The deal injected much-needed funds into the Egyptian economy, which has been hit hard by years of government austerity, the coronavirus pandemic, the fallout from Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and most recently, the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza. Houthi attacks on shipping routes in the Red Sea have also slashed Suez Canal revenues, which is a major source for foreign currency, by forcing traffic away from the canal and around the tip of Africa. Both Brussels and Cairo have serious concerns over migration.

Europe and Asylum-seekers

Arrivals of asylum-seekers and other migrants fleeing conflict and poverty in the Middle East and Africa for Europe over the past decade helped fuel rising far-right populism and led to stricter border controls that have drawn heavy criticism from human rights groups.

Before the Wednesday summit, the EU's top diplomat Kaja Kallas met with el-Sissi in Brussels, where he told her that "Europe hasn't been significantly affected by illegal immigration" because Egypt had thwarted launches since 2016 of many boats of migrants, according to a statement from the president's office.

El-Sissi should press the EU to do more for Gaza, said Eve Geddie, director of Amnesty International's European Institutions Office. ❑

Brazilian court acquits defendants in soccer academy fire that killed 10

By ELÉONORE HUGHES
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — A Rio de Janeiro state court acquitted the last remaining defendants accused of responsibility in a 2019 fire that swept through the sleeping quarters of an academy for Brazil's popular professional soccer club Flamengo, killing 10 teenage players.

They were accused of causing the fire due to negligence, and in May prosecutors had asked for their conviction. But Tuesday's ruling stated that there was insufficient evidence to prove that the defendants had directly contributed to the fire. The decision can be appealed.

"Criminal liability cannot be assigned to someone solely based on the position they held, without concrete proof of a decisive action or omission leading to the outcome," according to the Rio state court's statement published Wednesday.

Eleven people were initially charged in 2021, but charges only remained against the seven who were acquitted. Charges against the other four were dismissed at earlier stages.

Criminal liability for Eduardo Carvalho Bandeira de Mello, who was serving as the club's president at the time, was dismissed due to the expiration of the statute of limitations.

Mariju Maciel, a lawyer for the family of 14-year-old Pablo Henrique da Silva Matos who died in the fire, said Tuesday's decision adds to their suffering.

"We live in a country of impunity. All the evidence demonstrated that there were gross errors that led to the deaths of these adolescents," Maciel told The Associated Press.

The fire at the club, likely Brazil 's most popular and one of the most recognizable in Latin America, sparked widespread outrage at the time.

Firefighters were called just after 5 a.m. to the sprawling Ninho de Urubu training grounds in Rio's western region.

Like many professional clubs, Flamengo has a development program for promising young players.❑

A mural features the faces of the young soccer players who died in a fire at the Flamengo club training center in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Feb. 7, 2020.

Associated Press

A Cuban man deported by the U.S. to Africa is on a hunger strike in prison, his lawyer says

By GERALD IMRAY
Associated Press

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP) — A Cuban man deported by the United States to the African nation of Eswatini is on a hunger strike at a maximum-security prison having been held there for more than three months without charge or access to legal counsel under the Trump administration's third-country program, his U.S.-based lawyer said Wednesday.

Roberto Mosquera del Peral was one of five men sent to the small kingdom in southern Africa in mid-July as part of the U.S. deportation program to Africa. It has been criticized by rights groups and lawyers, who say deportees are being denied due process and exposed to rights abuses.

Mosquera's lawyer, Alma David, said in a statement sent to The Associated Press that he had been on a hunger strike for a week, and there were serious concerns over his health.

"My client is arbitrarily detained, and now his life is on the line," David said. "I urge the Eswatini Correctional Services to provide Mr. Mosquera's family and me with an immediate update on his condition and to ensure that he is receiving adequate medical attention. I demand that Mr. Mosquera be permitted to meet with his lawyer in Eswatini."

Matsapha Correctional Complex is seen in Matsapha, near Mbabane, Eswatini, July 17, 2025.
Associated Press

The Eswatini government said Mosquera was "fasting and praying because he was missing his family" and described it as "religious practices" that it wouldn't interfere with, a characterization disputed by David. She said in response: "It is not a religious practice. It's an act of desperation and protest."

Mosquera was among a group of five men from Cuba, Jamaica, Laos, Vietnam and Yemen deported to Eswatini, an absolute monarchy ruled by a king who is accused of clamping down on human rights. The Jamaican man was repatriated to his home country last month, but the others have been kept at the prison for more than three months, while an Eswatini-based lawyer has launched a case against the government demanding they be given access to legal counsel.

Civic groups in Eswatini have also taken authorities to court to challenge the legality of holding foreign nationals in prison without charge. Eswatini said that the men would be repatriated but could be held there for up to a year.

U.S. authorities say they want to deport Kilmar Abrego Garcia to Eswatini under the same program.

The men sent to Eswatini were criminals convicted of serious offenses, including murder and rape, and were in the U.S. illegally, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security said. It said that Mosquera had been convicted of murder and other charges and was a gang member.

The men's lawyers said they had all completed their criminal sentences in the U.S. and are now being held illegally in Eswatini.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has cast the third-country deportation program as a means to remove "illegal aliens" from American soil as part of U.S. President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown, saying they have a choice to self-deport or be sent to a country like Eswatini.

The Trump administration has sent deportees to at least three other African nations South Sudan, Rwanda and Ghana since July under largely secretive agreements. It also has an agreement with Uganda, though no deportations there have been announced.

New York-based Human Rights Watch said that it has seen documents that show that the U.S. is paying African nations millions of dollars to accept deportees.❑

Ukraine unveils upgraded sea drone it says can strike anywhere in the Black Sea

By EFREM LUKATSKY and DEREK GATOPOULOS
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukraine's state security service has unveiled an upgraded sea drone it says can now operate anywhere in the Black Sea, carry heavier weapons and use artificial intelligence for targeting.

Sea Baby drones ride on the water during a demonstration by Ukraine's Security Service in an undisclosed location in Ukraine Friday, Oct. 17, 2025.
Associated Press

Ukraine has used the unmanned naval drones to target Russian shipping and infrastructure in the Black Sea. The Security Service of Ukraine, known by its Ukrainian acronym SBU, has credited strikes by the unmanned vessel known as the " Sea Baby" with forcing a strategic shift in Russia's naval operations.

The range of the Sea Baby was expanded from 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) to 1,500 kilometers (930 miles), SBU said. It can carry up to 2,000 kilograms (about 4,400 pounds) of payload, SBU officials said. At a demonstration attended by The Associated Press, variants included vessels fitted with a multiple-rocket launcher and another with a stabilized machine-gun turret.

SBU Brig. Gen. Ivan Lukashevych said the new vessels also feature AI-assisted friend-or-foe targeting systems and can launch small aerial attack drones and multilayered self-destruct systems to prevent capture.

Developing a new kind of naval warfare

Drone strikes have been used in successful attacks against 11 Russian vessels, including frigates and missile carriers, SBU said, prompting the Russian navy to relocate its main base from Sevastopol in Crimea to Novorossiysk on Russia's Black Sea coast.

"The SBU became the first in the world to pioneer this new kind of naval warfare and we continue to advance it," Lukashevych said, adding that the Sea Baby has evolved from a single-use strike craft into a reusable, multipurpose platform that expands Ukraine's offensive options.

Authorities asked that the time and location of the demonstration not be made public for security reasons.❑

Planning on snorkeling? Get to know our "Dorado"

(Oranjestad)—If you're ever planning on snorkeling during your vacation on Aruba, you may spot fish that you can't recognize. One of these may be the "Dorado", a common fish that swims all year long in the waters of Aruba. Here's some information about the beloved Dorado.

Dorado has many different names it can be referred to. Dral, Dorao, Drals, Drado, are some of them in Papiamento. In English, it is also called Mahi Mahi, Dolphinfish, or Dorado. It's a good example to reflect on why there can be many names. The same fish becomes known by different common names, why? Common names come only when a group of people, to understand each other, assign a name to a fish. Mahi Mahi, for example, comes from Hawaii and means "very strong". Dorado is based on Spanish and refers to the golden yellow color that the fish shines with under the sun. Why it's called Dolphinfish in English is not well defined and while there are several stories around this, none have been confirmed.

Dorado is found in all tropical to subtropical oceans around the world. Dorado is very popular both for recreational fishing and for consumption. It is known among fishermen as an exciting catch and a fish that puts up a good fight. Its meat is very good for consumption and it is also commercially fished for that reason.

They grow very fast, up to 2.7 inches (almost 7 cm) per week. They can live up to a maximum of 5 years although very few reach that age. Most become adults within 1 year but many become reproductive after just 5 or 6 months and reproduce very quickly too.
They live in open water on the surface most of the time. Many fish seek them around sushi lines or floating objects on the sea. Often you will find a group landing together and if you keep a male on the line, often the others will stay close or can keep the group interested by giving shrimp or squid.

Description:
Dorado has a distinctive body. It has a large tail and its long, flat body ends in a large blunt head. Its color of yellow and green or blue makes it immediately recognizable, even with small variations in these colors.

Dorado has clear differences between adult females and males. The male is larger and can easily reach 50 to 80 pounds and has a much flatter head compared to the female. Therefore, male Dorados are also called "bull Dorado".

Dorado can be found in our waters around the island all year round, but there are periods when it is easier to find than others.❑

Source: The Department of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries (Santa Rosa).

Experience a taste of Belgium in Aruba – Only at L'Avenue, Palm Beach

Nestled in the heart of Palm Beach, Aruba, L'Avenue brings a fresh breeze of Belgian charm to the Caribbean. Just over a year since its grand opening, this intimate bistro has quickly made its mark with its warm hospitality, authentic cuisine, and elegant yet approachable ambiance.

Whether you're strolling through Palm Beach after a morning at the beach or looking for a special dinner spot, L'Avenue welcomes you with an inviting terrace, stylish décor, and the comforting aroma of Belgian classics crafted to perfection. It's a place where locals, travelers, food lovers, and beer connoisseurs come together — united by a love for great food, heartfelt service, and that unmistakable European flair.

At L'Avenue, every dish tells a story — one of tradition, seasonality, and bold yet balanced flavors. From crispy croquettes and perfectly poured Belgian beers

to steaming pots of fresh mussels flown in weekly, the menu offers something both comforting and surprising.

Lunch includes a variety of sandwiches—with a healthy selection of bread options—if you're going for a light meal, but just like their dinner selection, also includes steak, chicken, fish, and even rabbit if you're craving a bit more of L'Avenue's exquisite menu. And let's not forget their wide selection of Belgian beer and European wine to complete the tasty experience! But that's not all! L'Avenue is offering their guests their Early Bird Special, available every day from 4pm to 7pm. Enjoy this affordable and delectable 3-course meal special at a comfortable price of $29.50 per guest, which includes a selection of their fine in-house wine.

More Than a Bistro
A Culinary Destination

L'Avenue is more than just a place to eat — it's a culinary destination. A thoughtfully curated menu, an extensive selection of premium Belgian beers, and an atmosphere that balances European elegance with island ease make it one of the most talked-about dining spots in Aruba.

Whether you're looking for a casual lunch, a romantic dinner, or a celebratory evening with friends, L'Avenue delivers a dining experience that's as memorable as it is delicious.

Open daily for lunch and dinner
Located in the heart of Palm Beach, Aruba
Come discover Belgium's best — right here at L'Avenue.❑

Rock stacking and its harmful effects

(Oranjestad)—Aruba Birdlife Conservation has raised an alarm about the phenomenon of "rock stacking" reaching the area of Baby Beach and warned about the dangers it poses, especially for children.

As known, "rock stacking" is not illegal in Aruba, but its impact on nature is harmful as the stones form part of the natural habitat of small animal species living in Aruba's wilderness. Experts warn that "rock stacking" could even lead certain species to extinction.

In Aruba, much of the "rock stacking" also occurs near Arikok National Park. Although this activity is not illegal in Aruba, it may be time for park authorities to impose stricter regulations on this activity.

Tourists often believe that the meaning behind this activity is making a wish, but they do not realize its negative impact.

Aruba Birdlife Conservation's post not only raises alarms about the activity but also now that this phenomenon has reached Baby Beach, some of the stacked stone towers are up to 1.7 meters high, which can be very dangerous, especially for children. ❑

Celebrating Forty Years – Weekly Free Slot or Table Play for all Qualified Club Members

BONUS BINGO THURSDAY!

Bonus 4-Card BINGO starting at 1pm!
$7 for 4-Card BINGO | 8 Games to Play
$1,500 in Cash Prizes
SPECIAL PROGRESSIVE GAME
Jackpot within 50 Calls | 51 Calls or more $200
Additional $500 Cash Prize in our Monthly Early Bird Drawing when you purchase your card before noon!

THE SHOPS AT ALHAMBRA CASINO
Auntie Anne's Pretzels | Aruba Aloe | Baskin-Robbins
Juan Valdez Café | Hungry Piranha - Pizza, Wings & More
The Brownstone Ribs and Seafood | The Market
Shalom Body & Soul Spa | Moments & Memories Jewelry
Magnet Perfume Jewelry & Cosmetics | The Lazy Lizard
Shalom Hair & Nails Bar | Twist of Flavors | Dunkin Donuts
Treasure Cove | El Patio Tacos & Tequila | M8 Boutique
Fusion Restaurant, Tapas, Wine & Piano Bar

Alhambra CASINO AND SHOPS
Open daily 10am to 3am | J.E. Irausquin Blvd #47 | 288.9000 | casinoalhambra.com
Play Responsibly. Visit www.gamblersanonymous.org if you or someone you know has a gambling problem.

The stories of "Compa Nanzi"

(Oranjestad)—The most popular character you may hear about in the Caribbean is Anansi, known locally on Aruba as "Compa Nanzi". Local children grew up hearing the tales of the conniving spider, and his legacy forms part of the oral narrative tradition that is common in Aruba.

Although the stories are most popular in the Caribbean, "Compa Nanzi" is not entirely unknown globally, especially not in the West African region. Brought to the "new world" by enslaved Africans from Ghana, the historical thread of how Nanzi was introduced on Aruba follows the enslaved Africans in Curacao during the colonial era, which saw the biggest population of enslaved Africans in the Dutch Caribbean.

The stories of Compa Nanzi were a sign of hope for freedom among the slaves, who passed around different stories involving the famous spider through word of mouth, due to not being able to express their native culture in the new world. These stories were a way to not only preserve their culture, but it acted as a medium for relief during the harsh treatment to which they were subjected to.

It wasn't until the end of the nineteenth century that the stories of Nanzi were written down in different languages. However, not all stories are completely alike in every country, as is the risk of oral story telling. However, one thing will always be dominant in Compa Nanzi's stories: his sneaky ways to get what he wants!

How Nanzi fooled the king

One day Nanzi was taking a stroll near the castle of Shon Arei, the king. He had this sudden urge to walk in. He didn't think too much about it and committed to what he had in mind. It was a warm afternoon, and the castle personnel were taking their afternoon nap. Even the soldier guarding the castle door was fast asleep, snoring so loud that his beard bounced up and down on his chin. Nanzi just slipped past him, looked back for a moment then walk right on in.

Nanzi stumbled upon the king's quarters. With all his excitement he sat in the king's throne, and put on his crown that was hanging on the side of the throne. It was very hot that day, and it wasn't long until Nanzi too fell asleep, right there on the king's throne. He was so deep in sleep and snoring so loud, that even when the king found him in his seat, Nanzi did not even notice.

Shon Arei was flabbergasted by the sight of Nanzi on his throne, wearing his crown. How disrespectful! "Soldiers, get him!" he commanded. Nanzi was sound asleep, but when the soldiers picked him up, he jumped from fright. By then though, the soldier already had him in their hold.

"Put him in a sack, stitch it up and throw him in the ocean!" the king said furiously. Two soldiers immediately entered the chamber, took the crown off Nanzi's head and pushed him in a sack.

Nanzi was terrified; it looks like this time he won't get away with his schemes. To get to the ocean, the soldier walked a long distance, and where beginning to feel very thirsty. Luckily they passed by a pub, and decided to have a nice cold beer. They set the sack with Nanzi in it outside and went to enjoy the refreshments. Nanzi was still trembling with fear in the sack.

What is that he hears? A herd of sheep walking by?
"Compadre, listen here!" Nanzi screamed as loud as he could. The sheep herder got close to the sack. "What is this?"

"Man, there is something very beautiful in here that you can see. It's very rare and strange, but indeed, there is something so beautiful in here that you've never seen or will ever see," Nanzi told the herder.

The herder, very dumb, believed Nanzi's word. "Let me see!" he said. "Well if you must insist," Nanzi said, "I'll let you take a look, but only for a quick second." The herder opened the sack, and Nanzi immediately jumped out. Before the herder could even take a look into the sack, Nanzi pushed him in it, and the herder fell head first in.

Nanzi didn't waste any time, and closed off the sack real tight. He then picked up the herder's hat and starting walking behind the traveling sheep as if nothing happened. After a little while, the soldiers headed back outside to continue their journey. As they picked up the sack, the poor herder started screaming to let him out, but the soldiers ignored him, thinking it was Nanzi.

Shon Arei went strolling a while later. He thought to himself: "This time Nanzi could not get away with his foolishness. He probably drowned in that sack ages ago." That is why, when he saw Nanzi walk behind the herd of sheep on the street, he was flabbergasted again. "Nanzi! Aren't you suppose to be at the bottom of the ocean floor?"

"I was, Your Majesty," Nanzi replied. But you know what, there is so many things to see down there in the sack! Like this herd of sheep. Seeing that they had no herder, I started walking behind them and gained their trust pretty quickly. At the bottom of the ocean there are so many wonderful things, like diamonds, and bags of gold. Chests of silver and other precious stones," Nanzi told the king.

"What is that you say?" the king was intrigued. "I want to see it too!"
The king immediately demanded to his soldiers to be put in a sack and be placed in the ocean. Naturally, Shon Arei died because of this. He was never found again. Nanzi followed the soldier back to the castle, where sat once again on the late king's thrown and put his crown on. He took possession of all of Shon Arei's belongings, and lived the rest of his life as king.❑

Story and pictures are from "Kon Nanzi a Nek Shon Arei (i otro kuentanan antiano di e araña sabi)" by Nilda Pinto.

Food culture in Aruba

(Oranjestad) – Like many other cultures, an important aspect of the Aruban cultural identity is our connection to food and food traditions. The local food traditions consist of a melting pot of different cultural and religious eating habits and dishes.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

The routine of breakfast, lunch and dinner on the island is one that does not completely follow a European or American routine, despite the major influences from these parts of the world on our culture and way of living. When it comes to the three important meals of the day, most of the Aruban population follows a Latin-American influenced routine.

Breakfast

Breakfast in Aruba is quite simple: a cup of coffee or tea, some bread, and sometimes an egg. Sometimes, due to the need of a quick "to-go" breakfast, you may also find many snack trucks and cafes that sell sandwiches, pastechis (meat pie), arepas and empanadas early in the morning.

Main Meal

The main meal is typically eaten in most households around noon or in the afternoon. This can consist of meat, fish, and chicken—stewed or fried—with funchi (polenta) or rice with stewed vegetables. Often, fried or boiled plantain or pan bati (Aruban pancake) is included. Stews are a staple in Aruban cuisine and can are largely influenced by Latin-American and Latin/Afro-Caribbean Stews. Some of the more unique stews and soups from the ABC Islands* include sopi di bonchi cora (red kidney bean soup with pig tail), sopi mondongo (tripe soup), carni stoba (beef stew), comcomber stoba (West Indian gherkin stew) and much more.

Dinner Time

Dinner time can vary significantly from household to household. Unlike the U.S. or in Europe, dinner time typically does not consist of a whole (warm) meal. Instead, the evening "meal" can typically consist of something lighter, like a sandwich, though it is not uncommon to see leftovers from the main meal reheated and eaten again. Tea and coffee are often also served with the evening snack.

(Religious) Holidays

Christmas is probably the biggest global holiday, and every culture has its own spin on what their Christmas cuisine entails. In Aruba, our Christmas cuisine is again largely based on Latin-American influences, most notably form Venezuela. Ayacas and the famous pan di ham* are two crucial holiday dishes, along with stuffed turkey, roasted glazed ham topped with pineapples, arroz con pollo (rice and chicken) and potato salad, among other items. Traditional drinks include ponche crema (Aruban eggnog), chuculati pinda (hot chocolate with peanut butter), and homemade fruit punch. Desserts include, bolo di pistachio (pistachio cake), bolo di cashupete (cashew cake), quesillo (flan), bolo preto (dark fruit cake), drigidek (gingerbread), pan boyo (bread cake) and more.

Snacks and tasty delights

Besides meals and dishes that are eaten on the dinner table, Aruba also has a food tradition that includes snacks and other tasty delights that you may easily find around the island. These include, Saco*, basket, pastechi, kroket, deditos, Johnny cake and more. These snacks are usually sold at local snack trucks and cafes, often located on the side of the road. In the area of Tanki Leendert and Tanki flip, for example, there are many of these trucks parked on the side of the road and often open until late at night—offering tasty and filling snacks post night-life fun.❑

***ABC Islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao**

***Pan di ham: Derived from the Venezuelan Pan de Jamon (rolled up bread with ham, raisins and olives)**

***Saco: Saco literally means "bag". Saco contains fried potatoes, plantains, chicken (and ribs) and a Johnny cake, served in a paper bag.**

Source: Voeding, voedingsgewoonten en gerechten op Aruba (Nutrition, Food Traditions and Dishes on Aruba) by Biblioteca Nacional Aruba

Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — You are back or still enjoying your vacation?… we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is ……. Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.❑

Aruban legends: Frenchman's Pass

(Oranjestad)—If you ever plan on taking a group tour of the island, you may pass through the Frenchman's Pass in Balashi. The Frenchman's pass (known to locals as "Franse Pas") remains a mysterious—and spooky—road of which its legend is told from generation to generation.

The history of the Frenchman's pass—and how it got its name—dates back to the colonization era, when the French tried to colonize the island, but were met with an angry mob of indigenous settlers, refusing to give up their land. However, as the French were heavily equipped with fire arms, the indigenous settlers began to retreat, and hid away in nearby caves. The French colonizers tried to smoke them out of the caves, but the indigenous settlers ended up inhaling too much smoke and most died in those caves. From then on, this passage was known as Frenchman's Pass, and there have been many accounts of spirits roaming the area of Spanish Lagoon.

There are many ghost stories surrounding this area, but one of the most famous one involves a lonely hitchhiker, trying to find a ride back home in the dark rainy night.

Some time after trying to hitchhike, the man saw a car approaching, appearing almost ghost-like in the rain. However, since he needed a ride real bad, he didn't think twice and jumped in. But to his horror, he noticed that the there was no driver in the front. Paralyzed with fear, he didn't dare to get out, and the car started to move.

When approaching a sharp turn, the hitch hiker braced for impact, but just when he though the car might drive straight off the road and crash, he saw a hand appear out the window and turn the wheel. For the next few turns, the hand appeared again. After having had enough, the man decided to jump out and he ran to Santa Cruz.

Arriving at a nearby bar, he ordered a drink and began to tell everyone about his experience. Everyone grew quiet, because they realized he wasn't some drunk messing around; he was telling the truth.

Some time later, two men walked into the bar and one of them noticed the hitchhiker. He called out to his buddy and said: "Look, there's the idiot who sat in our car when we were pushing it!"

French man's pass is one of the few sites on the island that keeps the locals on their toes. While most ghost stories may not have real grounds—or some may even be a set up story for a joke, this pass contributes a lot to our culture of folkloric story-telling.❑

Source: visitaruba.com

The Bali Restaurant: a touristic hot spot and lost gem on the island

(Oranjestad)—Once located in what is now the Renaissance Marina, the Bali Restaurant was once both a touristic and local hot spot, and nowadays it's considered a forgotten gem on the island.

Known as "the floating restaurant", Bali first opened in 1955 by Willem "Bill" Strijland, who had experience in Javanese cuisine. At the time, the restaurant was pretty exclusive—with space to host only 25 guests. Yet, 4 years later, it was named the best restaurant in the Caribbean by the Caribbean Tourist Association.

The restaurant was probably most iconic for its Javanese-inspired exterior with its pointy, slanted roofs. However, the first version of Bali did not look like that at all but was still considered as one of the most popular restaurants on the island at the time. The restaurant saw three different owners during its existence, during which it underwent various renovations and rebranding.

In 1964, the restaurant was taken over by Karel "Carl" Schmand. Over the years, the restaurant needed constant renovation and repair, mainly due to its vulnerability to leaks and the unstable pillars underneath the foundation. However, the biggest change made to the restaurant happened in the year 1970—still under the ownership of Schmand, when it got its iconic pointy roofs. The restaurant was also expanded to host a total of 85 guests. This was "The New Bali", who had its official (re)opening in 1972.

After 1972, when Ronny Schmand took over, the restaurant saw yet another expansion; this time complete with a long bar and dance floor, where guests enjoyed live music from legendary Aruban musician and composer, Toti Arends.

After 1989, the restaurant was again handed over to other owners, and since then suffered from unstable pillars underneath the foundation, resulting in various leaks and overflowing of water into the restaurant. And as most great things come to an end, so did the survival and maintenance of the Bali Restaurant. However, folks today still reminisce its legacy, and it's now considered a lost monument.

Be apart of the conversation: if you or any family member of yours have a memory of the Bali restaurant, whether it be a picture or just a story, share it with us! We would love to see this legendary hot spot through the lens of our visitors!❑

Source and pictures credit to: "De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over de geschiedenis van Aruba)" by Evert Bongers.

ARUBA TODAY

CROSSWORD

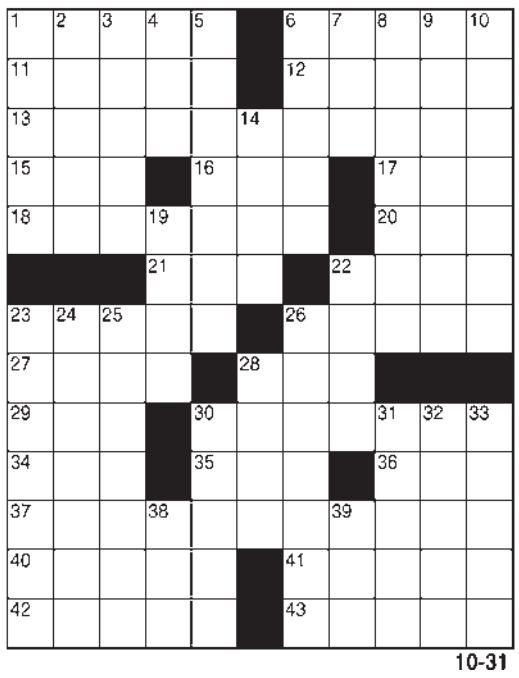
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Deck of fortunes
6 Origami need
11 Love, in Lille
12 Full of energy
13 Tool with a bubble
15 Annex
16 Be a contender
17 Mine yield
18 Take back
20 Finger count
21 Bowler, for one
22 Swift
23 Olympics award
26 Sailors
27 Made fun of
28 Use a needle
29 Zero
30 Apparition
34 Court worker: Abbr.
35 Feel poorly
36 Dr.'s org.
37 Extremely hot garden item
40 Spine-tingling
41 On the way out
42 Halts
43 Good judgment

DOWN

1 Perp zapper
2 Plentiful
3 Stirs up
4 Owned by us
5 Far from important
6 Showed fear
7 Hoppy brew
8 Crucial
9 Highest peak
10 Lets up
14 Color
19 Niger neighbor
22 Forest youngster
23 Oversees
24 Nickname
25 "Night-mare Alley" director Guillermo
26 Sailor's balance
28 Fleet unit
30 Party spreads
31 Short putt
32 Troubling signs
33 Homer's wife
38 Tentative taste
39 "The Raven" writer



10-31

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

10-31 CRYPTOQUOTE

I Y C Q X L N C O V G U I , Y C U G A

N G G Y ; Z O G H R I Y E Z P I G , Y U C Q X

Z U Y U G R Y ! — U P I Y L N C I Q E G U

Cryptoquote: BY THE PRICKING OF MY THUMBS, SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES. — WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, "MACBETH"

Cruise ship Schedule: Oct. 14 - 26 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	CALLS
TUE	14	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	C	1
WED	15	SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
FRI	17	CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE	07.00	17.00	C	1
SUN	19	NORWEGIAN ESCAPE	07.00	17.00	B	1
		CARIBBEAN PRINCESS	09.00	22.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-
TUE	21	SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
WED	22	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
		OASIS OF THE SEAS	07.00	16.00	I	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
THU	23	EURODAM	08.00	17.00	C	1
SUN	26	*FREEWINDS - Dept.*	****	22.30	E	-

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

3				7	5			
6			4	9		8		
	9			8			2	7
8			3					
	6	9			7	3		
	4			2		7		1
		4		3	9	6		8
		6			2		5	
9					4			

Difficulty: ★★★ 10/23

©2025 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Answer to previous puzzle

9	8	5	2	1	7	3	6	4
4	1	6	8	9	3	7	2	5
7	3	2	6	5	4	9	1	8
2	6	3	1	7	8	5	4	9
5	9	7	3	4	6	1	8	2
1	4	8	9	2	5	6	3	7
8	2	1	7	6	9	4	5	3
3	7	4	5	8	1	2	9	6
6	5	9	4	3	2	8	7	1

Difficulty: ★★★ 10/22

©2025 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

COVID-19 vaccines may help some cancer patients fight tumors

By LAURAN NEERGAARD
AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The most widely used COVID-19 vaccines may offer a surprise benefit for some cancer patients – revving up their immune systems to help fight tumors.

People with advanced lung or skin cancer who were taking certain immunotherapy drugs lived substantially longer if they also got a Pfizer or Moderna shot within 100 days of starting treatment, according to preliminary research being reported Wednesday in the journal Nature.

And it had nothing to do with virus infections.

Instead, the molecule that powers those specific vaccines, mRNA, appears to help the immune system respond better to the cutting-edge cancer treatment, concluded researchers from MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston and the University of Florida.

The vaccine "acts like a siren to activate immune cells throughout the body," said lead researcher Dr. Adam Grippin of MD Anderson. "We're sensitizing immune-resistant tumors to immune therapy."

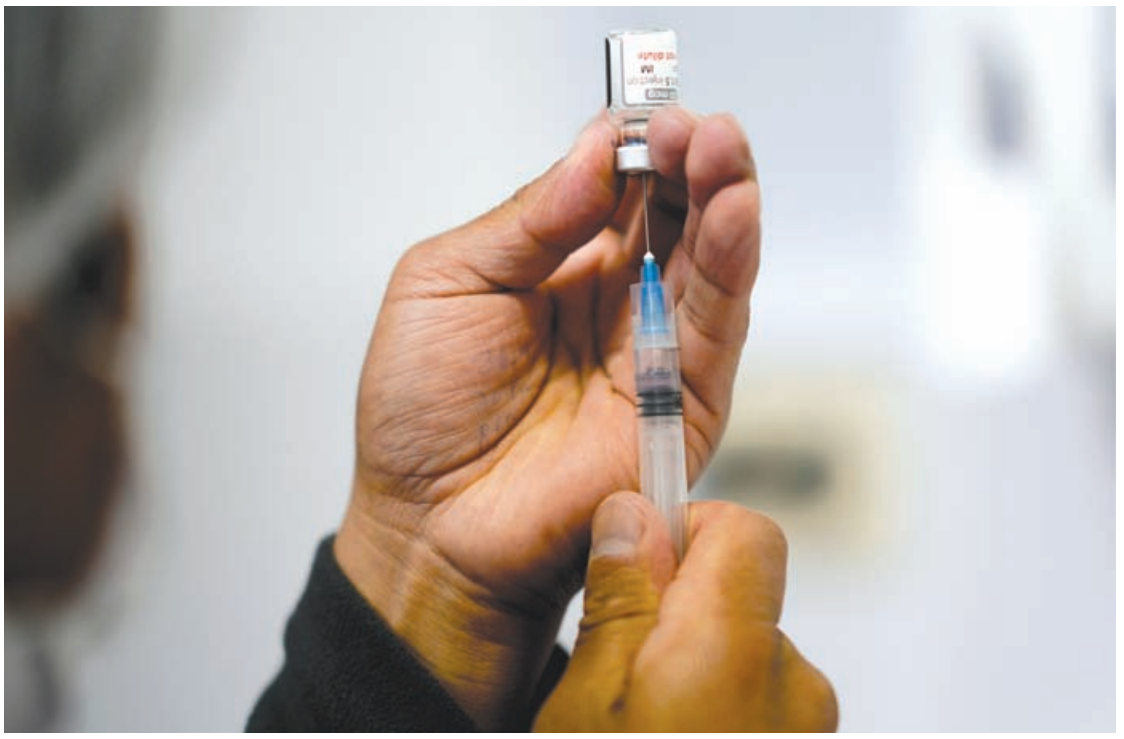
Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has raised skepticism about mRNA vaccines, cutting $500 million in funding for some uses of the technology.

But this research team found its results so promising that it is preparing a more rigorous study to see if mRNA coronavirus vaccines should be paired with cancer drugs called checkpoint inhibitors — an interim step while it designs new mRNA vaccines for use in cancer.

A healthy immune system often kills cancer cells before they become a threat. But some tumors evolve to hide from immune attack. Checkpoint inhibitors remove that cloak. It's a powerful treatment – when it works. Some people's immune cells still don't recognize the tumor.

Messenger RNA, or mRNA, is naturally found in every cell and it contains genetic instructions for our bodies to make proteins. While best known as the Nobel Prize-winning technology behind COVID-19 vaccines, scientists have long been trying to create personalized mRNA "treatment vaccines" that train immune cells to spot unique features of a patient's tumor.

The new research offers "a very good clue" that maybe an off-the-shelf approach could work, said Dr. Jeff Coller, an mRNA specialist at Johns Hopkins University who wasn't involved with the work.



A healthcare worker prepares a shot of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine in La Paz, Bolivia, Jan. 7, 2025.

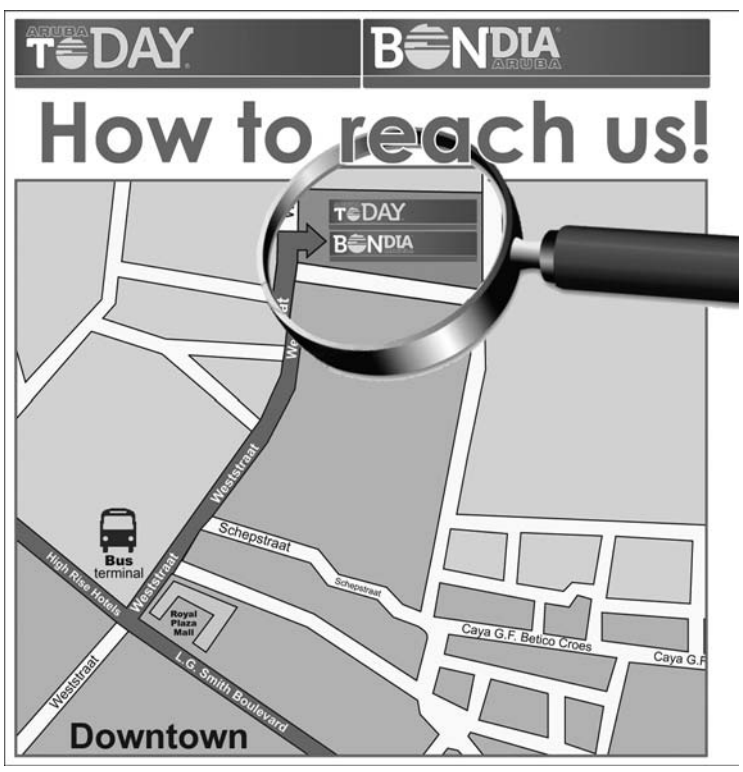
Associated Press

"What it shows is that mRNA medicines are continuing to surprise us in how beneficial they can be to human health."

Grippin and his Florida colleagues had been developing personalized mRNA cancer vaccines when they realized that even one created without a specific target appeared to spur similar immune activity against cancer.

Grippin wondered if the already widely available mRNA coronavirus shots might also have some effect, too.

So the team analyzed records of nearly 1,000 advanced cancer patients undergoing checkpoint inhibitor treatment at MD Anderson comparing those who happened to get a Pfizer or Moderna shot with those who didn't.❑



ARUBA TODAY

Editor
Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
Acc. #23951903
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

Editors
Pilar Flores
Richard Brooks
Angenette Figuereo
Oriana Geerman

Sales
Mark Gomes
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds
classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection
accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website
Juan Luis Pinto

Weststraat 22
T: 582-7800
E: news@arubatoday.com
W: www.arubatoday.com
@ArubaTodayNews

HEALTH

DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad
Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas
Imsan 24 hours
Tel.524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:
Paradera: Tel.588 6638
San Nicolas:
Centro Medico:Tel.584 5794

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank
Tel. 588 0002

FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

General Info

Phone Directory Tel. 118

Like us on Facebook
ARUBA TODAY NEWS

One Tech Tip: How to prepare for outages that impact our online lives, from banking to chatting apps

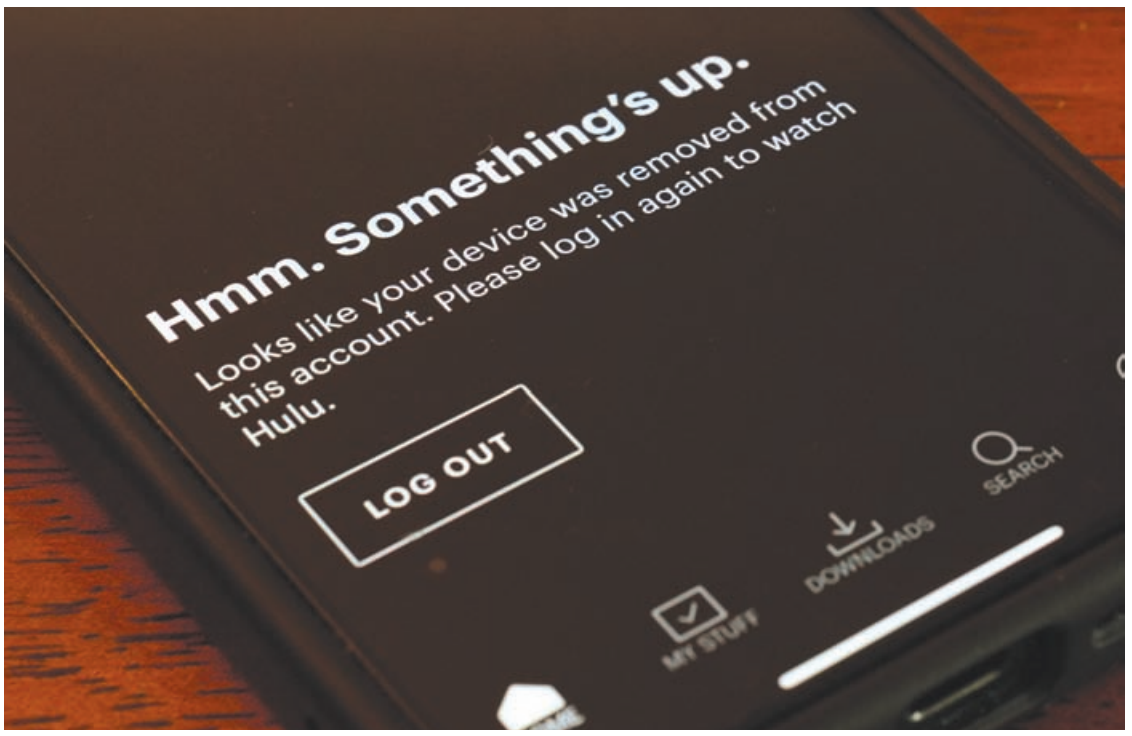
By WYATTE GRANTHAM-PHILIPS
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A major Amazon Web Services outage disrupted scores of online platforms on Monday leaving people around the world unable to access some banks, chatting apps, online food ordering and more.

History shows these kinds of system outages can be short-lived, and are often minor inconveniences such as placing a lunch order in person or waiting a few hours for a gaming platform to come back online than long-term problems, but recovery can be a bumpy road. And for people trying to move money, communicate with loved ones or work using impacted services, disruptions are especially stressful.

Consumers may not realize how many platforms they use rely on the same back-end technology. AWS is one of only a handful of major cloud service providers that businesses, governments, universities and other organizations rely on. Monday's outage is an important reminder of that and experts stress it's important to diversify our online lives where we can, or even have some "old school" alternatives to turn to as a backup plan.

"Don't put all your eggs in one digital basket," said Lee McKnight, an associate professor at Syracuse University's School of Information Studies, noting these kinds of outages aren't going away anytime soon.



A Hulu mobile app shows it is not available during the Amazon Web Services outage, Monday, Oct. 20, 2025, in Chicago.

Associated Press

So what, if anything, can you do to prepare for disruptions? Here are a few tips.

Keep your money in more than one place

During Monday's AWS disruptions, users on outage tracker Downdetector reported problems with platforms like Venmo and online broker Robinhood. Banks such as Halifax and Lloyds also said some of their services were temporarily affected, although some customers continued to report lingering issues.

Even if short-lived, outages that impact online banking and other financial services can be among the most stressful, particularly if a consumer is waiting on a paycheck, trying to pay rent, checking on investment funds or making purchases. While much of your stress will depend on the scope and length of disruptions, experts say a good rule of thumb is to park your money in multiple places.

"I'm a big fan of holding multiple accounts that can give us access, to some degree, of funds at any given time," said Mark Hamrick, senior economic analyst at Bankrate. This underlines the importance of having an emergency savings account, he explains, or other accounts separate from something like day-to-day checking account, for example.

Keeping some cash in a safe place is also a good idea, he adds and emergency preparedness agencies similarly recommend having physical money on hand in case of a natural disaster or power failures. Still, it's important to keep hoarding in moderation.

"We shouldn't go overboard, because we can lose cash it can be stolen or misplaced," Hamrick said. And in terms of prudent financial practices overall, he explains, you also don't want to have lots of money "stored under a mattress" if it could instead be earning interest in a bank.

Depending on the scope of the outage, some other options could still be available.

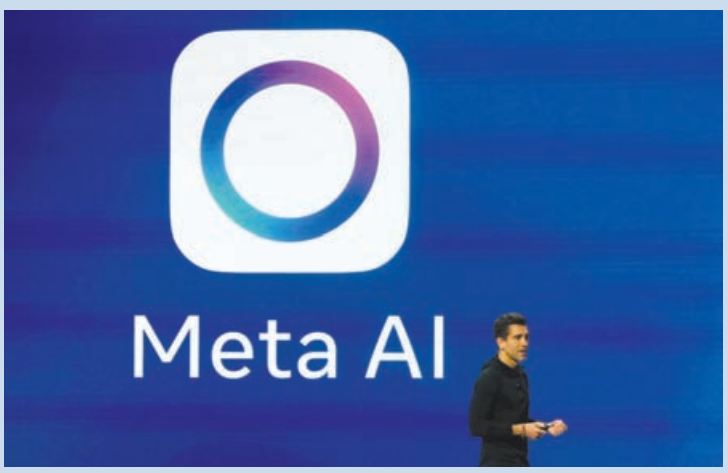
If digital banking apps are offline, for example, consumers may still be able to visit a branch in person, or call a representative over the phone although wait times during widespread disruptions are often longer. And if the disruptions are tied to a third-party cloud services provider, as seen with AWS on Monday, it's not always something a bank or other impacted business can fix on its own.

Have backup communication channels

Monday's AWS outage also impacted some communications platforms, including social media site Snapchat and messaging app Signal.

In our ever-digitized world, people have become all the more reliant on online channels to call or chat with loved ones, communicate in the workplace and more. And while it can be easy to become accustomed to certain apps or platforms, experts note that outages serve as an important reminder to have backup plans in place.❑

Meta cutting 600 AI jobs even as it continues to hire more for its superintelligence lab



Meta Chief Product Officer Chris Cox speaks at LlamaCon 2025, an AI developer conference, in Menlo Park, Calif., April 29, 2025.

Associated Press

The Associated Press

MENLO PARK, Calif. (AP) — Meta Platforms is cutting roughly 600 artificial intelligence jobs even as it continues to hire more workers for its superintelligence lab, the company confirmed on Wednesday.

Axios first reported the cuts, which will affect Meta's Fundamental AI Research, or FAIR unit, as well as product-related AI and AI infrastructure units.

Its newer TBD Lab unit won't be affected. Citing a memo sent to workers by chief AI officer Alexandr Wang, Axios said the company is encouraging employees affected to apply for other jobs at Meta, with most expected to find other roles. The Menlo Park, California-based company is also still recruiting and hiring for TBD Lab, which is developing Meta's latest large language models. Large language models are the technology behind OpenAI's ChatGPT, Google's Gemini and Meta's Llama.

Meta has taken a different approach to AI than many of its rivals, releasing its flagship Llama system for free as an open-source product that enables people to use and modify some of its key components. Meta says more than a billion people use its AI products each month, but it's also widely seen as lagging behind competitors such as OpenAI and Google in encouraging consumer use of large language models, also known as LLMs.❑

Baseball could be in the midst of a Dodgers dynasty

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

TORONTO (AP) — Baseball could be in the midst of a Dodgers dynasty, a much-debated word reserved for teams achieving sweeping success.

By beating Toronto in the World Series that starts Friday night, Los Angeles would capture its third title in six years.

"Just winning one is hard," Dodgers first baseman Freddie Freeman said. "If you can get three in a matter of five, six years, I guess you could say it is one. But I think it's the sustained winning that the Dodgers have done for so long and then obviously to cement it with some championships, I think, yeah, I guess you can call this if we do it a modern-day dynasty."

Baseball has no widely accepted definition.

Most give pantheon status to the 1949-53 New York Yankees (five straight titles), the 1936-39 Yankees (four), the 1972-74 Oakland Athletics (three) and the 1998-2000 Yankees (three) the last team to win consecutive championships. The Dodgers are the first defending champion to reach the World Series since the 2009 Philadelphia Phillies.

"If I was broadcasting, I would not refer to them as a dynasty," Emmy-winning commentator Bob Costas said. "You can compare them to the Braves who won 14 divisions in a row but got to the World Series five times and lost it four of those five times."

Los Angeles Dodgers' Mookie Betts celebrates in the dugout after scoring against the Milwaukee Brewers during the first inning in Game 4 of baseball's National League Championship Series, Friday, Oct. 17, 2025, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

Yet he is willing to consider using the word because times have changed. The Dodgers have won 12 of the last 13 NL West titles and had 106 victories the year they finished second.

"There has to be lines of demarcation once you go to wild cards and then especially once you expand the playoffs as they've now been expanded," Costas said. "If you were really the best team over 162 or 154 (games) back in the day and you proved you were the best team, now you just got to win four out of seven."

Mookie Betts, who has been with the Dodgers since 2020, said he's more concerned about preparing for games than contemplating the team's historical place.

"If you're thinking about going to the postseason and obviously having a chance to win World Serieses year after year, I guess that would kind of qualify as some type of dynasty, but I don't know what it takes to call it that," he said.

Since the expansion era started, the only consecutive titles have been won by the 1961-62 Yankees, the mid-70s A's, the 1975-76 Cincinnati Reds, the 1977-78 Yankees, the 1992-93 Toronto Blue Jays and the late-century Yankees.

Earlier back-to-back titles also were won by the 1907-08 Chicago Cubs, 1910-11 Philadelphia A's, 1915-16 Red Sox, 1921-22 New York Giants, 1927-28 Yankees and 1929-30 A's.

John Thorn, Major League Baseball's official historian, thinks sustained success is sufficient to earn the dynasty honorific, even if every year didn't result in a title.

"I think a dynasty is today defined by consecutive pennants or division titles won, not by World Series championships," he wrote in an email. "So I think the Atlanta Braves of recent years, the Detroit Tigers of 1907-09, or the Giants of 1911-1913, are in. Three straight WS appearances, rather than three straight titles, does it for me."

Los Angeles won the title during the pandemic-shortened 2020 season and that year's expanded playoffs, then beat the Yankees in a five-game Series last year. Winning this year would for some make them comparable to the Yankees, who won four in seven years from 1956-62, and the Dodgers, who took three in seven seasons from 1959-65.

Teams with three titles in a four- or five-year span include the 1910-13 Philadelphia Athletics, the 1915-18 Boston Red Sox, the 1942-46 St. Louis Cardinals and the 2010-14 San Francisco Giants. "It just kind of puts us on a Mount Rushmore of sports organizations," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "The legacy, dynasty talk, a lot of that I feel is is meant for other people that aren't playing, and let them have those debates, where it's our job to kind of put those topics on the table."❑

Islanders fire goalie coach Piero Greco 6 games into the season

EAST MEADOW, N.Y. (AP) — The New York Islanders fired goaltending coach Piero Greco, making the change at an unorthodox time just six games into his seventh season with the team and after winning three in a row.

General manager Mathieu Darche announced the abrupt decision Wednesday to part ways with Greco and promote Sergei Naumovs from Bridgeport of the American Hockey League. Naumovs, who is Latvian, has been in Bridgeport since May 2024 but has an extensive history coaching franchise goalie Ilya Sorokin going back to their time together with CSKA Moscow in the KHL from 2018-20.

Sorokin's 3.90 goals-against average is second-worst and his .873 save percentage ranks fourth-worst in the NHL among netminders who have appeared in at least four games.

"Piero has done a great job for the organization for the last seven years," Darche said. "We just felt at this time it was the right timing to have a reset with our goalies."

Darche said he did not seek input from Sorokin, who is in the second year of a $66 million contract that runs through 2032.

"It's my decision it's not on the player," Darche said. "I know he's had success with Sergei, and that's where we went. It's 100% my decision, and the goalie had nothing to do with it."

Other Islanders news and notes

Injured forward Pierre Engvall had ankle surgery and is expected to miss the entire season, or roughly five to six months, according to Darche, who said goaltender Semyon Varlamov continues to progress toward a return from knee surgery.

With some other players banged up and salary cap space at a premium, the Islanders put forward Marc Gatcomb on waivers. The 26-year-old had only dressed in one game so far this season.❑

New York Islanders goalie Chris Gibson, right, of Finland, talks to a coach Piero Greco during a break in an NHL hockey team practice, Monday, July 13, 2020, in East Meadow, N.Y.

Associated Press

Relay revamp featuring Lyles and Richardson has US Olympic team looking for gold at 2028 LA Games

By EDDIE PELLS
AP National Writer

If the United States is going to win the most gold medals three years from now at the LA Olympics, there's a good chance the U.S. track relay teams will play a big part in that.

If this year's world championships are any sign of what's to come, then give the U.S. a better-than-average chance.

USA Track and Field overhauled its struggling relay strategy to start this Olympic cycle and won four of five possible gold medals at the world championships in Tokyo last month. Anchors in three of the wins were Sha'Carri Richardson, Noah Lyles and Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone.

United States' Sha'Carri Richardson celebrates as she anchors the team to gold ahead of Britain's Daryll Neita in the women's 4 X 100 meters relay final at the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo, Sept. 21, 2025.

Associated Press

It marked only the second time over the past 10 years that both the men's and women's 4x100 teams won gold at the same major championship worlds or Olympics.

"We always have great talent, but do we have the culture in place to allow the talent to achieve what they're capable of?" said Robert Chapman, the USA Track and Field chief of high performance operations.

"I feel we took a solid, positive step to nailing that process and getting that established."

The most notable difference comes in the way the relay team is selected. For last year's Olympics, USATF had a list of no fewer than eight people who had input into the makeup of the team. For 2025, that list was pared down to two general managers former U.S. sprinter Wallace Spearmon and distance runner Amy Begley.

"There's always been involvement by a high-performance committee and we've had contractor coaches" making decisions, Chapman said. "It wasn't exactly straightforward.

We tried to reorganize and restructure how we do relays."

That, in turn, kept the coaches out of politics about team make-up and allowed them to "focus on fundamentals of what really matters, like passing the baton," Chapman said.

The old way was pocked with questionable decisions, many of which appeared steeped in politics that nobody quite understood. Last year, the men's 4x100 team extended a streak without an Olympic medal to 20 years (They finished second in 2012, only to have that medal stripped for a doping violation.)

Even with this year's success, bad exchanges have cost the U.S. men in seven worlds and six Olympics since 1995.❑